

# **A Conversation...For Parents of Teens**

## **Year End Evaluation Compilation**

**Presenter/Facilitator: Jon Mattleman**

### **Program Dates and Topics:**

October 14 <sup>th</sup>	Stress, Depression, and Suicide
November 2 <sup>th</sup>	Teens and Technology
December 12 <sup>th</sup>	Open Agenda
January 15 <sup>th</sup>	Drugs and Alcohol
February 12 <sup>th</sup>	Make Peace/Not War With Your Teen
March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Teens and Sex
April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Open Agenda

### **What did you find most valuable about this workshop?**

- Confidentiality
- Other parents
- The conversation
- The facilitator
- The openness of the group to share and express concerns and ideas
- To hear that other parents are going through the same issues with their kids
- Good open and honest talk
- Connecting
- Sharing and getting feedback with other parents in my community
- Sharing with other parents
- Knowing that you are not alone
- The topic was relevant
- Presenter was knowledgeable and thoughtful
- The support of knowing that others are going through the same battles as myself
- The conversation
- The interaction
- To know that other parents are in the same boat
- Hearing specific facts/antedotes about technology and teens' use of technology
- Hearing ideas about ways to communicate better with teens about this topic
- Ideas for boundaries and controls
- I realize that I do not have to be/cannot be as knowledgeable and computer literate as the kids, but I can still communicate about it as part of our lives
- The openness and willingness to share personal experiences
- Dialogue with other parents (there are not enough opportunities to connect this way)
- It was informative
- People were honest and caring and gave good advice
- Learning to admit you were wrong quickly

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- Listening
- Sharing with other parents
- The opportunity to meet other parents in my community in a small, intimate setting to discuss candidly the very important job of parenting teens
- I appreciated the confidentiality and felt safe
- Telling my teenager that I am a fan of hers, for life, and telling her often that I love her very much.
- Various experiences were shared
- Provided an environment in which parents appeared to feel comfortable dealing with their own shortcomings in dealing with their children
- Tell my son that I am his fan
- Sharing with other parents
- Jon's knowledge
- Hearing other parents
- Sharing our stories
- Loved listening to everyone
- Learning from other parents
- Learning from Jon
- That there are many problems that are common with one another
- Lots of strategies
- The parents here tonight
- Support for others struggling with the same problems
- Jon's suggestions/strategies
- The exchange of ideas
- New approaches
- Just sharing the experiences with each other
- The moderator's experiences
- The shared experiences of other parents
- I found that other parents are dealing with similar issues
- Not to be so shocked about possible sexual behavior and how to calmly handle situations
- Hearing input and the experiences of other parents
- Support from other parents dealing with similar situations
- Getting ideas from professionals and other parents
- Hearing other parents express their feelings and issues with the subject and seeing what their solutions were
- Just having other parents out there going through similar situations with their kids
- It is always fun to hear other comments
- Different parents have great insight into things we've taken for granted
- The communication between other parents
- New ideas
- Connecting with other parents
- The other parents
- It is easy to feel as though my husband and I are "the only ones"....until we meet with other parents and realize how common these problems are

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### **What might you change about the workshop? (if anything)**

- More book resources
- Longer (2)
- More discussion between participants (less from leader)
- Nothing, I thought it was great
- Maybe a little longer with a break
- Two hours flew by
- Longer if people and staff are willing
- Provide/talk about list of “sites” that are popular ---gmail, IM, Youtube are generally known
- Time is a constraint, but I would like to have explored specific topics in more depth
- More time
- Could there be more opportunities for parents to connect?
- Don’t increase the size beyond the 8 participants and the leader
- Nothing (6)
- Nothing --- it was great
- Half-hour longer
- Ask us to prioritize the list of “Things you might go to war about”...it might help to frame the discussion
- Nothing
- I would love to come to some meetings with my husband and other couples
- Keep it just the way it is
- A fan would be great when the room gets hot
- Make it a little longer
- Ask participants maybe to write down an incident they would like to address (e.g. if they come upon their daughter/boyfriend having sex)
- The room was too hot
- Allow more time for group to explore topics --- sometimes I felt that we changed topics too quickly
- Make it a multi-evening topic
- More time
- Maybe a second night
- Add a blog
- It was a shame that not everyone showed up
- Would you ever have anything with a parent and child together?
- Half hour longer
- Stop midway to check that “top topics” are getting addressed
- I would have parents write down “top 3” battles they have chosen to negotiate with their teens about

### **What is one thing you have learned/thought about from this workshop that you might/will try?**

- Asking the hard question --- when you are sad have you ever thought about hurting yourself
- To ask open and direct questions to my children
- Relate own experiences, fears, and anxieties to whatever your child is experiencing

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- I will try to avoid power struggles with my teen
- To listen and to give verbal, positive feedback whenever I can
- This affirms many of my instincts about trying to listen and hear
- To listen quietly, especially when I am angry
- Try to ask my daughter to show me her myspace and facebook
- Talk (to my kids) more about websites
- Setting limits, especially with computer time
- Ask my child to take me to their favorite sites
- Lots of talking with a focus on accepting' reliance/need for the social networking computers provide
- Stating boundaries
- Ask my kids to show me their favorite sites
- Restate that the kids have autonomous but it is also responsibility
- Keep talking and listening to your kids and let technology in their life – but screen and limit it carefully
- Information on technology and at-risk behavior was important to know (I may look for more materials on the subject)
- I learned to be willing to drop issues and come back later
- To think before I act
- Many good tips
- Just to go to bed before getting (too) upset
- Being more aware when my teen does something positive
- Acknowledging the good
- Building self esteem
- I will try to tell my teen how impressed I am by what they are able to accomplish.
- I will remember to praise more and give more positive feedback
- Thinking a lot about how to apologize
- How to admit my mistakes as a parent
- Things that I regret about choices I have made in my own life
- Thinking about how to celebrate things that are going well
- Not to get focused on “what’s wrong”
- Different strategies that are designed to de-escalate conflict with our children
- Conversing with my daughter is a different way
- Listening without judging
- Listen more, comment less
- Ask “do you want me to listen or comment?”
- Listen
- Walk away before argument escalates
- Walk away...walk outside first
- Ensure that other children know when other child’s behavior is inappropriate
- Listen more and lecture less
- Listen and not comment
- Use humor
- There will be consequences for your behavior – we will wait to talk about these (until later)
- “I know that you have a good reason....(for your behavior)”
- To listen actively and exclusively

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- Use a “code” and humor
- (use the parallel) “Drive safely, drive defensively”
- Say that we need to talk later (rather than now)
- Talk with the lights off
- Watching movies and talking
- Try to be positive and non-judgmental
- Use humor when dealing with my teen
- Talk to child in terms of their values, self worth, and the importance of listening to their parents because they can benefit from our experiences
- I/we will try to pick our battles
- Stamina --- great advice
- Knowing that it is ok not to negotiate everything
- Some things are not debatable
- Negotiating --- i.e. curfew
- Ways to communicate better with kids
- Closing my mouth a lot more and just listening
- At the end of listening, if there is appropriate affect, then I might ask “do you want any feedback or comments?”
- Talking in the dark (2)
- Using humor to drive a point home
- Respect their point of view
- Keeping things positive and light with my kids
- Letting them know what I think
- Being more open and honest
- A “code” so they can leave a bad situation
- Leaving articles of importance for child to read
- “A code”
- The idea of a code to indicate a problem that my teen might have in a situation where they feel uncomfortable and want to leave

### **Feedback to leader:**

- Thanks (2)
- Good job leading discussion and covering all topics that were introduced
- Good moving from one topic to another with very good strategies
- Excellent.
- Very happy to be a part of this and look forward to other discussions in this series
- Great job of facilitating
- Thanks for leading tonight and for being such a good listener
- Thanks for including our questions and thoughts
- Knowledgeable with a big heart
- I’m glad your participated as you have
- Great insight
- Very knowledgeable about child development
- You have many do-able suggestions based upon your experiences
- Great facilitator
- Thank you!
- Great job as usual

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- Excellent speaker with enormous knowledge on the subject of technology
- Very informative and meaningful at this time
- Jon was a fabulous facilitator
- It was very easy to engage with the group with his leadership
- Terrific
- Many thanks Jon
- Awesome job Jon
- Thanks for taking the time
- You did a great job (2)
- Very informative
- Well done
- I have a co-worker from another town who wished her town had this resource
- Thank you for a very helpful session tonight
- Jon is extremely knowledgeable and helpful
- Jon's insights are always most helpful
- Thank you for the humor and insight
- Excellent info
- Good program, good dialogue, good value
- Excellent Jon
- Thank you so much for sharing your expertise
- Jon, your wisdom is invaluable
- I frequently share your thoughts with friends and I copy and share the literature with out of state friends
- Thank you so much
- Keep your honesty
- Keep your humor
- Keep your sensitivity
- It is a pleasure coming to these
- Excellent
- You do such a great service to our community
- Thank you (3)
- I thought it was great
- I wish it could go longer or maybe have multiple workshops on this topic over time
- Thanks Jon for the great discussion and your sharing
- You facilitated open dialogue
- Modest way
- Comfortable to talk to
- Good personal examples of your children
- Good idea to wait until the next day to discuss an uncomfortable situation
- Terrific antidotes
- I enjoyed the facilitation
- So knowledgeable about different issues
- Thank you Jon for your valuable experience
- Great job as usual
- Keep doing these discussion groups
- Keep it going ---it's great
- What are your "top 3"
- Great job (2)
- Very informative